

# WESLEY UNITING CHURCH, FORREST, ACT.

January 12th, 2025

Baptism of Jesus

10:00AM LITURGY

## THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

### **Acknowledgement of First Nation's People**

Let us acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, the first inhabitants of this place, part of God's good creation.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

### **Our Rich Mutuality**

The Uniting Church in Australia believes that all people are made in the image of God, and so we accept every individual regardless of race, age, creed, sexuality and gender.

*The liturgist greets the people*

### **Call to Worship and Greeting**

*The liturgist welcomes the community both in the church and beyond, on-line.*

### **Invocation**

**Leader:** God promised: "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants." *Isaiah 44:3* Jesus promised: "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Helper, to be with you forever, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

**Women:** *Jesus said: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

**Men:** Peter proclaimed: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you

**will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself."**

**Leader:** God keeps His promises! On the first Pentecost Day the Holy Spirit was poured out on the believers in Jerusalem. We also have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, poured out on us as through the water and the Word of Holy Baptism, when we were made children of God. He claimed us as His own through the words that call us together: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**Leader:** Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful,

**People: and kindle in us the fire of your love. Alleluia**

### **TiS 468 We Are Your People**

Music: John Wilson (1905-92)

Words: Brian Wren (b. 1936)

### **Prayers of Confession**

*The Liturgist introduces the themes for today, the first Sunday after Christmas*

### **Confessing and Embracing God's Call**

**Leader:** Our God, we come weary from the weight of burdens you never asked us to carry, while neglecting burdens you have called us to. Holy Spirit, we need your guidance and leading. Hear our confession, and give us strength to bear one another's burdens with your love, care, and compassion. (Laura B. Murray)

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** Gracious God, forgive us when we fail to look honestly at ourselves. It is easy to minimize and justify our sin, believing we can appease our guilt. We are afraid, thinking it is up to us to remove our sins and make things right. But, we are powerless, and you are powerful. Help us to live fearlessly as we face our sin, knowing that we belong to the one who is able to break the power of all sin, Jesus.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*A time for silence to confess our brokenness.*

## **Declaration of Forgiveness**

**Leader:** Let us receive Christ's pardon for all of our sins, and receive God's peace that we can never generate on our own. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. **Amen.** (C. Hassell Bullock)

*We stand as we are able to sing the gloria*

## **Gloria TiS 447, v.4**

Holy and blessed Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might,  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth far and wide,  
let there be light.

Music: adapt. by Felice Giardini (1716-96)  
Words: John Marriot

## **The Peace**

*The peace is shared either through the taking of the other's hand, by placing our right hand over the heart, or clasping our hands together in a prayerful gesture with a slight bow.*

## **THE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

### **The Children**

*The liturgist leads the community in the collect*

### **Collect**

**Leader:** Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you. **Amen.**

*The liturgist prepares the community for the readings*

### **Prayer for Illumination**

God of light,  
you have revealed yourself to us in your son Jesus Christ,  
your one Word made flesh,  
who lived among us, full of grace and truth.

Open us to your revelation once again,  
that in the words of your holy scripture  
we might know your presence and follow in your light always. **Amen.**

**Hebrew Bible:** Isaiah 43:1-7, p. 585-586

**NT:** Acts 8:14-17, p. 892

**Gospel:** Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 p. 834

The Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

## **Preaching**

**Offering Hymn      TiS 398      Come Down, O Love Divine**

Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Words: Bianco de Siena, trans. Richard Littledale (1833-90)

*The people shall stand as the offerings are brought forward.*

## **Prayer over the Offerings**

*The liturgist offers the prayer*

Blessed are you Lord God. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share, for the service of your rule of compassion and justice. **Amen.**

## **Prayers for the Church and World**

Today we pray for the peoples of Iran, Iraq, Syria

We are thankful for:

- the resilience of the people who remain in their homelands even when they face constant threats and ongoing violence
- the relief and assistance that has been provided to so many
- those who have made a new home for refugees fleeing from these countries
- those who have worked continually for peace, justice and reconciliation.

We pray for:

- an end to the violence racking these battlefields of global powers

- political leaders emerging in these countries who will pursue peace, the common good, and human rights of all groups
- the international community to pursue policies that will result in acceptable, just peace for all involved
- greater openness to welcoming those displaced or fleeing from these lands, desperately seeking safety and wellbeing.

### **Litany for Iraq**

For lasting peace in this ancient land –

*from you, O Lord.*

For wisdom and compassion for all in authority –

*from you, O Lord.*

For comfort of families separated or bereaved –

*from you, O Lord.*

For the release of captives –

*from you, O Lord.*

For safety and security for minority communities—

*from you, O Lord.*

For refreshment for the weary and healing for the sick –

*from you, O Lord.*

For continuing faithfulness of the ancient churches of this land –

*from you, O Lord.*

For tenacity of spirit for small Christian groups –

*from you, O Lord.*

For the mutual enrichment and support of those of different Christian traditions –

*from you, O Lord.*

### **Lord's Prayer**

Let's join in offering the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins,**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us in the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,**

**now and forever. Amen.**

## **Announcements**

### **TiS 270 On Jordan's Bank**

Music: from 'Musikalisches Hand-Buch' (1690), adapt. William Havergal (1793-1870)

Words: Charles Coffin (1676-1749), trans. John Chandler (1806-76)

### **Blessing**

Lord, thank you for the precious gift of baptism, that we can publicly declare our love and passion for you. Lord, we thank you that you set an example for us. And the blessings of God, Father Son and Holy Spirit be upon you now and always, **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

**In the name of Christ**

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**Liturgist & Preacher:** Rev'd Dr. Bruce Stevens

**Music Coordinator:** Jade McFaul

**Organist:** Mary Anne Nielsen

**Bible Reader:** Bruce Bowman

**Stewards:** John & Lorraine Sanderson, Kerri & Robert Henderson

**IT:** Simon Cowling & Christine Hearn

**Flowers:** Ann Sutton

**Powerpoint Presentation:** Rosemary Everett

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